

**Congress of the United States****Washington, DC 20510**

October 21, 2011

*WCB  
USF/ICC  
1468*

The Honorable Julius Genachowski  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> St SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We write regarding proposals to reform the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation (ICC) system that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is currently considering.

In particular, we believe any reform must take into account the impact on small, rural communication providers, like those in Iowa, and their customers – our constituents. It is critical to consider the great strides that so many rural cooperatives and small commercial communications providers have made in using valuable USF and ICC resources to provide outstanding service in remote, hard-to-reach, and high-cost areas of rural America. We should embark on a policy course that builds upon and sustains this successful model rather than dismantles it. Doing anything less will do a disservice to our constituents and will make rural economic development initiatives more difficult.

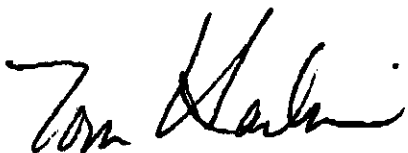
There is broad agreement regarding the need to reform USF and ICC, but we need to do so in a deliberate and careful way that both promotes broadband service where it is not available today and also does not harm rural customers who already have broadband service. Without access to reasonably comparable broadband service, rural America will fall behind in terms of distance education, telemedicine, and economic development. Today, access to affordable broadband service isn't a luxury – it is fundamental to doing business, educating our children, providing medical care, and protecting our national security. As such, decisions you and your colleagues make today will have dramatic, long-term implications for the quality of life for rural communities.

Many stakeholders have weighed in on this issue, and we encourage the FCC to examine their suggestions and proposals carefully. In so doing, we urge you and your colleagues to evaluate all specific proposals with a focus on achieving the twin goals of both maintaining broadband where it is today and promoting more widespread availability. We hope the commission will reject any USF and ICC reforms that would undermine the availability and affordability of services offered by small rural providers in high-cost areas, and instead will implement reforms

that build upon and sustain the great success so many rural communications providers have had in deploying robust broadband.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Tom Harkin  
United States Senator




Chuck Grassley  
United States Senator



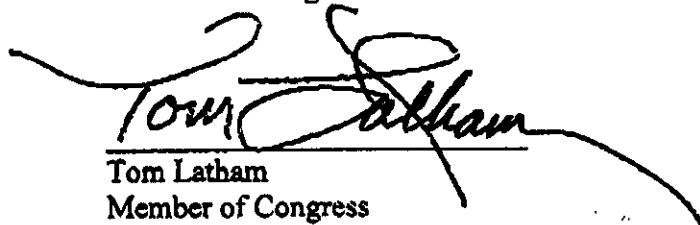
Leonard Boswell  
Member of Congress



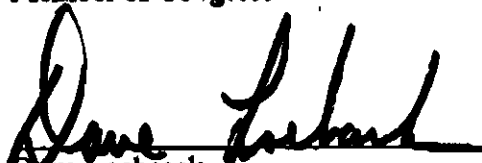
Steve King  
Member of Congress



Bruce Braley  
Member of Congress



Tom Latham  
Member of Congress



Dave Loebsack  
Member of Congress

cc: Commissioner Copps  
Commissioner McDowell  
Commissioner Clyburn



# UNITED STATES SENATE

Senator Tom Harkin

731 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510-1502  
Website: [harkin.senate.gov](http://harkin.senate.gov)

Phone: (202)224-3254

Fax: (202)224-9369

Date: 10/21/2011

To: Hon. Julius Genachowski

With: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: 202. 418. 2800

From: Dan Goldberg

Pages to Follow: 2

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI  
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley  
United States Senate  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Grassley:

Thank you very much for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to reform and modernize the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation system (ICC). Your thoughts and concerns were a valuable contribution to our process, and were considered as part of the Commission's deliberations.

On October 27, after many years of hard work on Capitol Hill, among the FCC's Commissioners, and by Commission staff, the Commission unanimously adopted a comprehensive Order overhauling the broken and backward-looking USF and ICC systems for the Internet age. By transitioning these programs to the Connect America Fund, we are delivering on our shared national goal of universal voice and broadband service – including universal mobile voice and broadband service – and enabling increased private sector investment in the indispensable infrastructure of the 21<sup>st</sup> century: broadband. Importantly, our reforms are fiscally responsible, eliminating waste and inefficiency, using market-based mechanisms to target support where it is needed, and putting the Fund on a firm budget.

The Commission's Order will create jobs beginning in 2012, and lay the foundation for enduring job creation, economic growth, and U.S. global competitiveness for years to come.

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of the Order's "Executive Summary." Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Genachowski", with a checkmark at the end of the signature line.

Julius Genachowski

Enclosure



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI  
CHAIRMAN

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United States Senate  
731 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

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Julius Genachowski

Enclosure